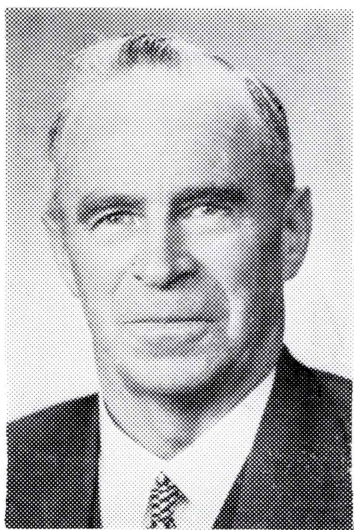


**CENTENARY OF
GERALDINE AND
TEMUKA DISTRICTS
1855 – 1955**

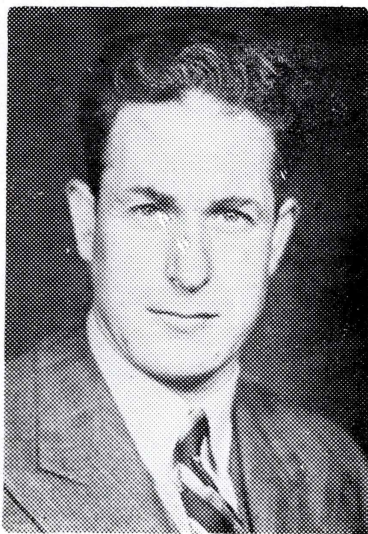


The Four Peaks Range

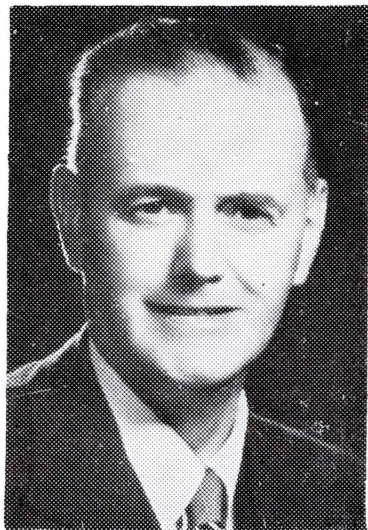
**HISTORICAL SURVEY
AND PROGRAMME OF CELEBRATIONS**



A. J. DAVEY, M.P.
*Chairman Geraldine County
Council*



C. S. DAVIES, Esq.
Mayor of Geraldine



G. A. HARRIS, Esq.
Mayor of Temuka

Robin Mitchell CP
\$6.50

THE LAND WE LOVE

by

WILLIAM VANCE

*The Story of the
Geraldine and Temuka
Districts*

Contents

chapter		page
1	First Comers	3
2	The Squatters	7
3	The Townships	11
4	Road Boards	23
5	The ' Cockies '	25
6	Land Hunger	26
7	Farm Revolution	28
8	Governance	29
9	' The Blanket Wears Out '	33

P L A T E S

	page
Main Street, Geraldine	4
Early Scene, Geraldine	5
Sale Yards in 1882	6
Main Street, Geraldine	9
Talbot Street, Geraldine, 1866	12
The Old Bark Hut	14
Early Scene, Temuka	15
Talbot Street, Geraldine, 1866	18
Temuka's Early Shopping Area	19
Geraldine County Council, 1905	20
Modern Transport	22
Bullock Team	22
Temuka Business Area	24
Fishing the Rangitata for Salmon	27
Geraldine County Offices	30
Temuka Domain	32

1

FIRST COMERS

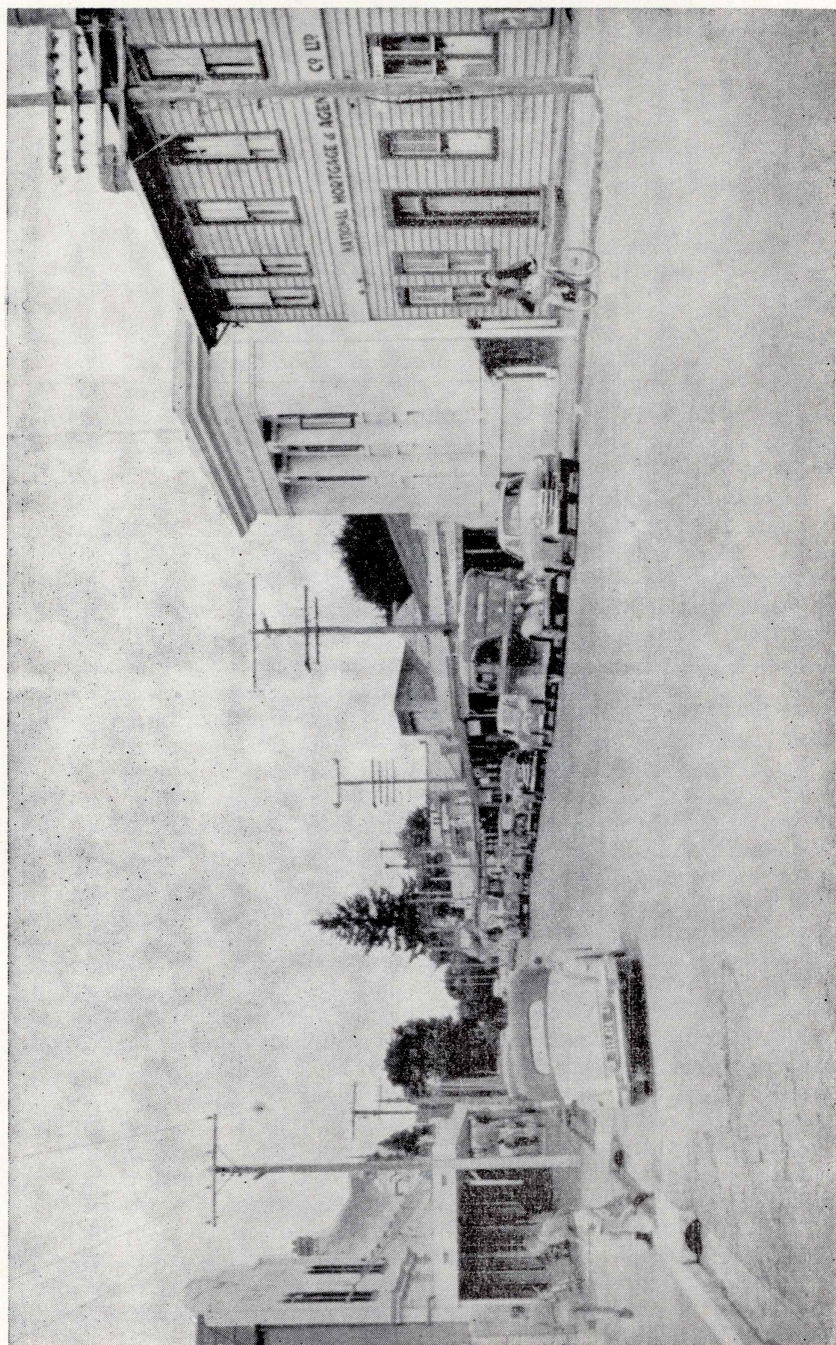
THE LAND IS SURVEYED. And the first recorded description of the Geraldine County was written by that surveyor, Charles Torless, in 1849.

Torless, a nephew of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, one of the founders of Canterbury, was a surveyor under Captain Thomas who had been sent out from England by the Canterbury Association to survey the land for the new settlement. Torless named the downlands of South Canterbury 'The Aglionby Downs', which included practically the whole of the Geraldine County.

Of this area, Torless wrote : ' There is no doubt, from the native accounts, that there are several masses of coal among the Aglionby Downs. There is also abundance of limestone among the same hills. Judging from the excellent crops of wheat and potatoes grown upon the open plain by the natives of Horowhenua, there can be little doubt that a considerable portion of the district is available for agricultural purposes ; and there is no question whatever that the whole of it will afford excellent grazing for sheep and cattle, particularly the Aglionby Downs, as from the numerous patches of wood and beautiful streams among them, in addition to the fertility of the soil, they offer such tempting sites for stations.'

In the previous year, Walter Mantell, Commissioner for the extinguishment of native titles in the Middle Island, visited the Maori settlements of South Canterbury to discuss with the inhabitants the question of setting aside reserves.

Mantell continued his journey to Otago, but the pakeha to make the first recorded overland journey from Moeraki to Banks Peninsula was Edward Shortland. In 1844 he traversed the whole distance on foot and has left an interesting account of his journey. After crossing the Waitaki River, Shortland wrote : ' It appeared that there were extensive grass plains in the interior of this part of the island, similar to that which we were now traversing, and no doubt, well adapted to pasture sheep. The lofty ranges of hills however, separating them from the coast, and the absence of any kind of harbour between Banks Peninsula and Otakou, must always prove a serious impediment to the profitable export of wool from these otherwise valuable tracts of land. We may, however, carry on the imagination to another century — when this now desert country will no doubt be peopled — when the plains will be grazed on by numerous flocks of sheep, and the streams now flowing idly through remote valleys, will be compelled to perform their share of labour in



Main Street, Geraldine, To-day



Early scene of Geraldine Township

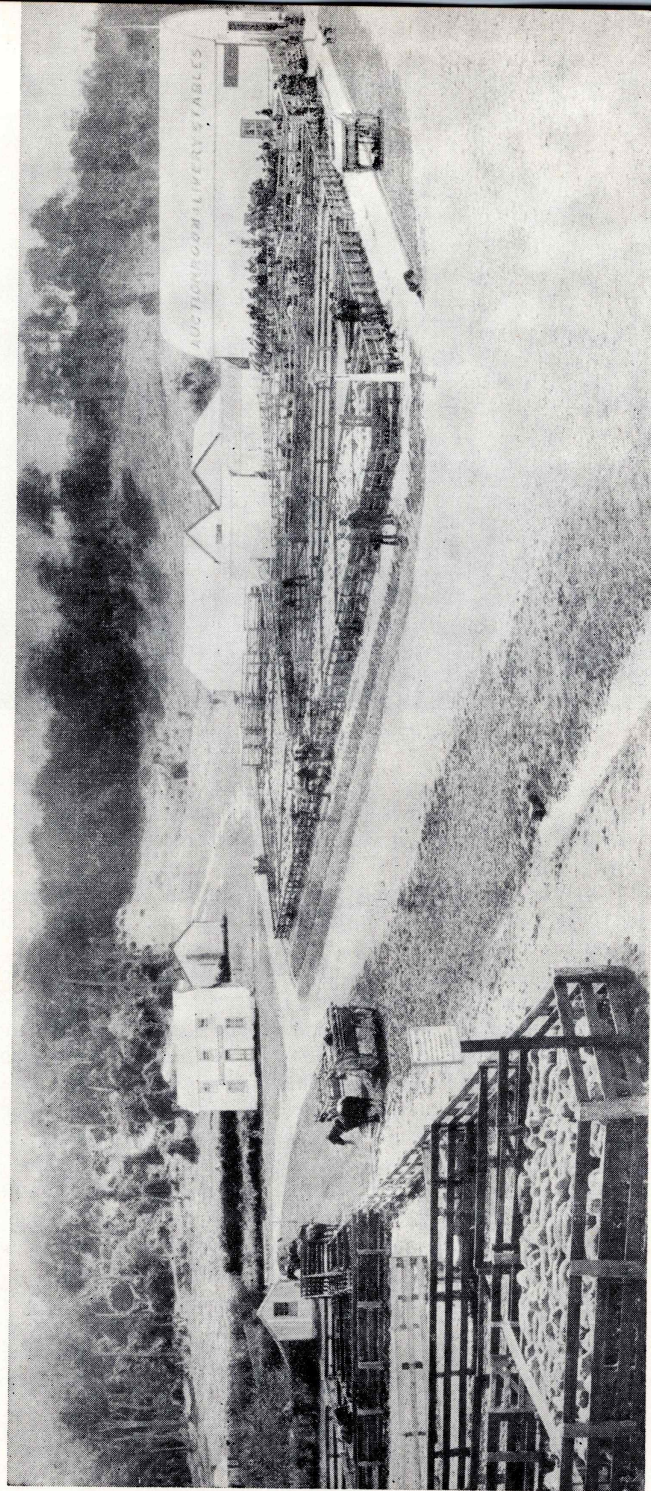
manufacturing wool.' This was a remarkable prophecy, especially that part which foretells the harnessing of our rivers for electrical development.

As Protector of the Aborigines, Shortland visited Maori villages, and stayed at Wai-a-te-Ruati, a fortified pa near the mouth of the Temuka River.

Wai-a-te-Ruati, principal pa of the South Canterbury Maoris, figures in the Kai-huanga feud which split the Ngai-tahu people, causing much bloodshed. Their depleted and divided ranks made this once-powerful tribe an easier prey to the raids of Te Rauparaha.

In the Kai-huanga feud, Te-mai-hara-nui, the Akaroa chief, went to Otakou to make peace with Taiaroa, principal chief of Otago. On his return, Te-mai-hara-nui stayed at Wai-a-te-Ruati for some days where he was well treated. Presents of potted birds were given to his party, and he asked from his hosts the assistance of some of their men to carry away these gifts. When the party reached the Akaroa harbour heads, Te-mai-hara-nui, with his own hands, killed the men from Wai-a-te-Ruati. The Kai-huanga feud flamed up again.

After Te Rauparaha had raided Kaiapoi, his scouts came as far south as Wai-a-te-ruati, but found the South Canterbury Maoris ready to defend themselves in this pa which was well fortified with heavy pallisades and earthworks and surrounded on three sides by the moat-like Wai-a-te-ruati stream.



Where the stock sales were held in Geraldine many years ago. 1882.

The confident defenders challenged the forces of Te Rauparaha to take their pa, but the raiding party replied : 'He aha te rawa a te Kaikoareare raua ko Rakiwhakaatia ki au' (what business have Te Kaiwoareare and Rakiwhakaatia with me). At the time there were 600 Maoris in the pa.

With the coming of the pakeha, the Maori population gradually began to move to Arowhenua, partly because it was on the traffic route between Timaru and Christchurch and partly because there was more ground suitable for cultivation. However, when Shortland visited Wai-a-te-ruati, it had a larger population than Arowhenua. The earthworks of the pa are still visible.

With his Maori guides, Shortland visited the deserted whaling station at Caroline Bay. Of it, he wrote : 'Many forlorn-looking huts were still standing there ; which, with casks, rusty iron hoops, and decaying ropes lying about in all directions, told a tale of the waste and destruction that so often falls on a bankrupt's property.'

2

THE SQUATTERS

AFTER the Timaru whaling station closed down, its steersman went to work at George Rhodes' Island Bay whaling station, near Akaroa. 'There is a great tract of sheep country lying to the south,' said Sam Williams to George Rhodes. The Rhodes brothers, George, Robert and William Barnard, were interested. They saw the land, and took up the area between the Opihi and Pareora rivers and back to the snowy ranges, estimated at 150,000 acres. The first sheep to come to South Canterbury was driven to their station, The Levels, in June, 1851.

The second run taken up in South Canterbury was Arowhenua, 30,000 acres, on the west side of the Arowhenua bush and bordering the northern banks of the Opihi River. The run was taken up in the name of Major Hornbrook and managed by his brother William. Mrs. Hornbrook was the first white woman to live in South Canterbury and her son Richards was the first white child born in South Canterbury.

Hornbrook's neighbour was Captain Richard Westenra, owner of Kakahu Station, 25,000 acres, between the Opihi and Hae Hae te Moana rivers. In those bridgeless days, river crossings were dangerous, and many lives were lost in attempting to ford them. Largely because of this, Westenra preferred to have a station north of the Rakaia, so he exchanged Kakahu with Kensal Green Station, afterwards called Camla, on the Selwyn River, Mid-Canterbury. When Rowland Campion, the former owner of Kensal Green, took over Kakahu in

1854, he built his homestead close to the present site of the Hilton school. The gum trees he planted are still there.

In spite of their dangers, Canterbury rivers had no terrors for Campion, especially when riding his horse, Doctor, which was famed for sure-footedness in river crossings. He was riding Doctor when he raced another South Canterbury squatter from Timaru to Christchurch, the prize stakes being the Kakahu bush. When in Ireland, Campion gave a demonstration of how New Zealanders crossed rivers, by crossing the Blackwater River at Fermoy. He was drowned in the attempt.

Between Kakahu and Fourpeaks stations was Opuha Gorge run of 22,000 acres, taken up by Major Hornbrook in 1853. In 1871 Hornbrook sold it to the Studholme brothers and the Hon. T. H. Wigley, who lived on the station as manager. One of their boundary-keepers was Mr. Leishman, and the foxgloves he planted round his hut at Leishman's Creek have now spread to the surrounding hills.

Above the Opuha Gorge Station was Raincliff Station, 50,000 acres, which went back as far as Ashwick. Raincliff was taken up in 1853 by Michael John Burke, who discovered the Mackenzie Country pass which bears his name.

Burke's cadet was Charles G. Tripp who, when returning from Raincliff, saw the hill country beyond Geraldine. In 1854 his friend John B. Acland joined him in a partnership to occupy this country which they called Mount Peel Station.

Below Mount Peel, and separated from Kakahu Station by the Hae Hae te Moana River, was Raukapuka Station of 60,000 acres. Its borders extended to the Orari River and from the Orari hills to the sea. Muter and Francis took out a licence to occupy this run in 1853, but sold their right to Alfred Cox in Australia in 1854. Cox was an Australian squatter, and he tells how, by chance, he met in Australia one of these partners who offered to sell his run licence for part of the area for £100. Cox paid him the money, then the seller pulled out of his pocket a second licence for another part of the land and sold this for £50.

Cox then sold his Australian property and came to live at Raukapuka in 1857. He had other stations, but he liked Raukapuka best and made it his home. Here he entertained freely, having as many as 30 guests at a time. One guest who liked coming there was Edward Fitzgerald, the Superintendent of Canterbury. Round his lovely home, Cox planted acres of English trees, many of which remain as a living memorial to him. From his homestead, 'the view', said Mr. Cox, 'was magnificent. In the foreground were plains and downs and low hills, clothed and crowned with every variety of forest trees, and thick with an undergrowth of beautiful shrubs. In the far distance, mountains, at that time of the year beginning to be coated with snow, and presenting an outline unsurpassed in beauty and diversity by any alpine view north or south in the great chain of snowy mountains in the Middle Island.'

In the Geraldine County, 60,000 acres was considered a big farm, but it was not big enough for Mr. Cox. In 1870 he sold Raukapuka to Sir Thomas Tancred to buy Balmoral Station in the Mackenzie Country – 150,000 acres – all snow country. The big snowstorm of 1871 dealt Cox a blow from which he failed to recover and, by 1876, was out of Balmoral. But Cox was not defeated, and turned to the



Main Street, Geraldine, looking north.

swamplands of Piako, in the Waikato district. He poured his money into the draining of Piako, only to come back to Christchurch almost penniless, but still undaunted. Years after he left Raukapuka, he brought his daughter back to see it. As they drove down the driveway, the daughter exclaimed: 'Oh Father, why ever did you leave such a beautiful place?'

Next to Raukapuka was Orari Station which took in all the country between the Rangitata and Orari rivers and from the sea to the road running from the Upper Orari bridge to Proudfoot's corner. This run was owned by the Macdonald brothers, William, Angus and Allan. Part of the original Orari homestead, 'Waitui', built of split slabs with rafters of split totara, is still standing.

Peel Forest Station, 25,000 acres, between the Rangitata and Orari rivers, was taken up by Mr. Francis Jollie, brother of the Chief Surveyor of Canterbury. In 1878 Mr. G. J. Dennistoun bought the

station in partnership with others, and his descendants still own the homestead block.

From Peel Forest to Forest Creek and between the Rangitata and Orari Rivers, Mount Peel Station of 105,000 acres was taken up by Messrs. Charles G. Tripp and John B. A. Acland. In 1862 Tripp and Acland dissolved partnership, Acland retaining Mount Peel Station, and Tripp taking the Orari Gorge section of 70,000 acres between the Orari and Hae Hae te Moana rivers and from the Woodbury road to Meikleburn.

Mrs. C. G. Tripp left an interesting record of those early days which gives some idea of the life they lived. She said : ' My husband, being very busy and out most of the day, I was very lonely and had only an uncongenial maid to speak to. I used sometimes to be afraid of forgetting my own language, and made myself learn the whole of Keble's " Christian Year " by heart, and read " Livingstone's Life " and a history of India and the few books my husband had, over and over again.'

The Tripp family were well known in the Geraldine district, and of Mr. Tripp, L. G. D. Acland wrote : ' Charles Tripp deserves special notice as the first man to think of putting stock on the high country of Canterbury. Tripp was a curious mixture of simplicity and shrewdness and these qualities showed themselves very clearly in his face, as did his other chief characteristics — his benevolence. He was so full of energy that he could hardly sit through his meals, and often said grace as he ran from the door to the dining-room. More stories were told of him in shearers' huts and mustering camps than of any other runholder in Canterbury.

' He was extremely temperate in all his ways. He never smoked, seldom drank alcohol, and never sat in any but a straight-backed chair. He always rode his horse at once pace — a steady trot. He had a very liberal mind and was always full of faith in the future of the country in general and of his own station in particular. He was always progressive and eager to adopt new ideas and try experiments. It is a bold statement to make, but I believe he was the most hospitable man that ever lived in Canterbury. No one could meet him without being struck by his kindness, and children and dogs seemed to take to him instinctively. I do not think he had an enemy in the world.'

Every swagger knew Orari Gorge Station and also knew that none were ever turned away from a place where, it is estimated, 600 swaggers a year were provided for.

To keep a record of meals served, each swagger was handed a meal ticket at the cook shop. A much-repeated story tells that, when Tripp was travelling in a train, he fell asleep. The guard, nudging him, said : ' Ticket please.' Waking suddenly from dreams of Orari Gorge, Tripp promptly replied : ' Ticket at the cook shop ; ticket at the cook shop.'

From Forest Creek to the Main Divide and bordered by the Rangitata tributaries, is Mesopotamia Station of 99,000 acres. This

station was consolidated and named by Samuel Butler, who afterwards became a world-famous literary figure. Bernard Shaw said : ' Samuel Butler was, in his own department, the greatest English writer of the latter half of the nineteenth century.'

Ninety years have passed since Butler lived at Mesopotamia, but the valley of the upper Rangitata remains much the same as when he saw it. In his book *Erewhon*, Butler wrote : ' The country was the grandest that can be imagined. . . . Beyond the downs was a plain going down to a river of great size. Up the river which ran winding in many streams over a bed some two miles broad, I looked upon a second great chain of mountains, and could see a narrow gorge where the river retired and was lost. I saw, whenever there were no clouds, a single snow peak, many miles away, and I should think about as high as any mountain in the world.'

The name of Samuel Butler was revived in 1942 at a meeting of the Geraldine County Council when the question of the payment of rates on 20 acres of land was discussed. The Council was advised that ' this area of land in C/T 408/85 is freehold property, with no encumbrances, the owner being Samuel Butler of Forest Creek, runholder '.

By 1855 almost all the area that was to form the district of the Geraldine County Council was taken up in large holdings and by far the greater amount of it was leased from the Canterbury Provincial Government. The rental for a 20,000-acre block was £5 for the first year ; £15 for the second year ; £30 for the third year, and increased to £100 by the seventh year. In order to protect themselves, some of the runholders steadily freeholded parts of their run. The price ranged from 10/- to £2 an acre.

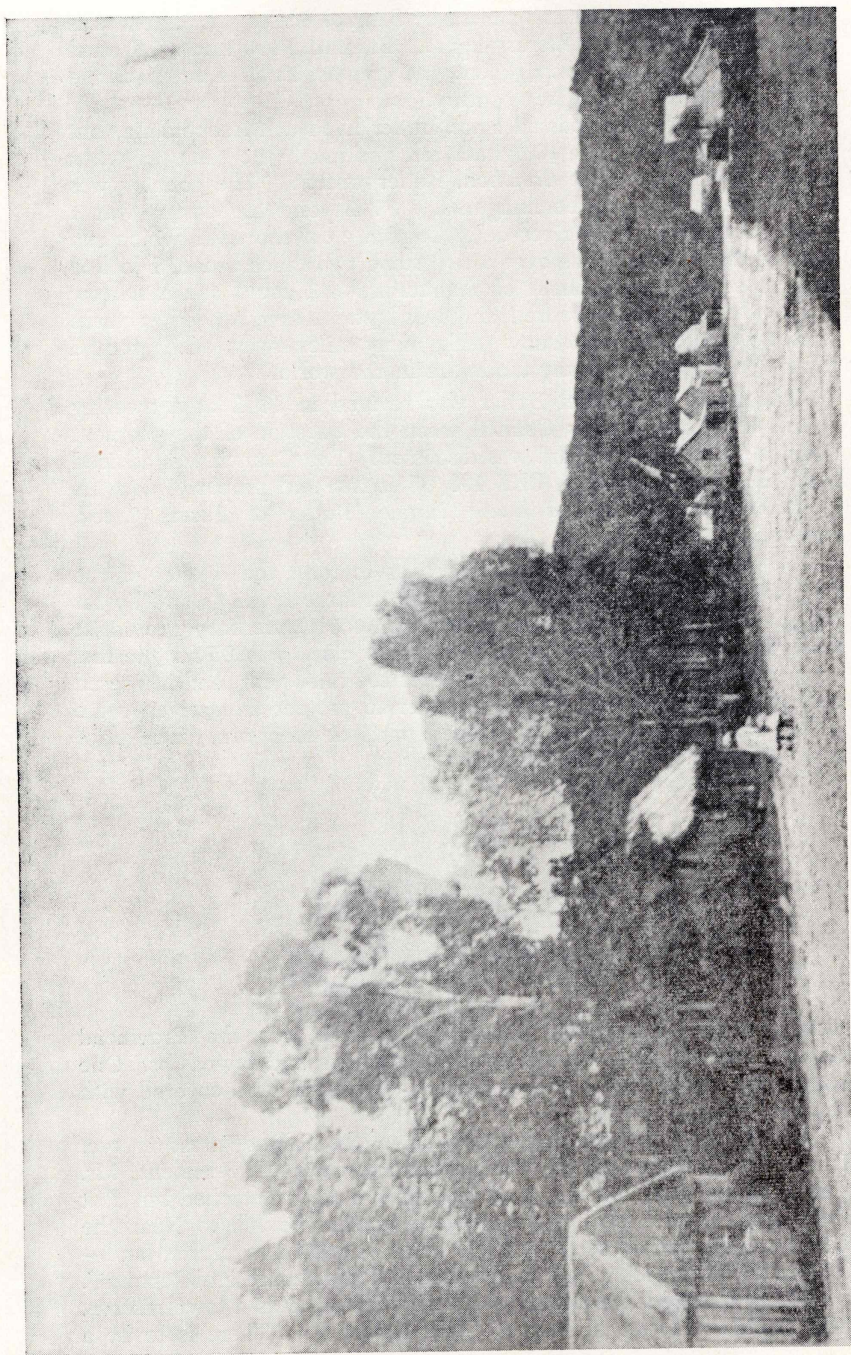
3

THE TOWNSHIPS

NOT ALL THE LAND was taken up in runs, for the Provincial Government set aside certain areas for reserves and townships. One such reserve was Talbot Forest, an area of swamp land covered with flax and scrub.

In reply to a question as to the extent of the Talbot Forest reserve, the Chief Surveyor for the Canterbury Provincial Government, Mr. Thomas Cass, said that it had an area of 800 acres detached but that there was ' considerably more above it under the hill'. Near the forest he said he had seen ' 100,000 acres of good agricultural land — swamp — but as good as the land between Christchurch and Papanui '.

Three hundred and twenty acres were set aside as a town reserve. The *Lyttelton Times* of May 2, 1857, reported : ' There is to be a



Talbot Street, Geraldine, in 1866.

town site reserved at Talbot Forest, which wants a name. The Provincial Council is asked to give one. No doubt they will take the name of some person prominent in our own little history.' After an all-night debate, the Provincial Council decided that the name be 'Fitzgerald' in honour of Edward Fitzgerald, the Superintendent. Fitzgerald, however, did not want this, so, in deference to his wishes, the name was changed to the Irish family name of the Fitzgeralds – Geraldine.

The first house in Geraldine was the totara slab and bark hut on the site of Logan's store. Here lived Samuel Hewlings and his Maori wife and the totara tree they planted to celebrate the birth of a daughter, still grows nearby. Geraldine has to thank Hewlings for reserving some of the hillside bush, which makes it the only place in Canterbury with bush in the township.

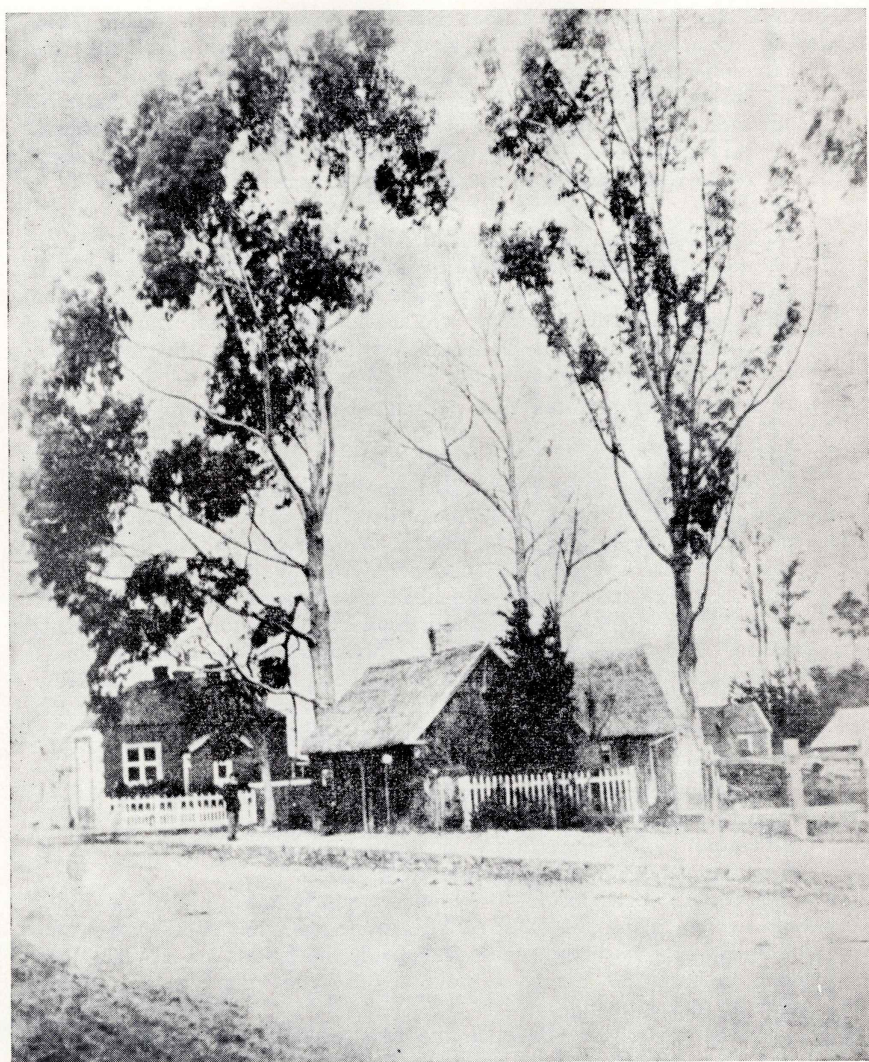
It is fitting that the first permanent resident should have been a carpenter – Caleb Maslin, who built a small house in Geraldine in 1861 to which place came his family from Timaru. Next year a house he built in Cemetery road was bought by Mr. Alfred Cox as a vicarage for the Rev. L. L. Brown, first vicar of Geraldine. In 1864 Mr. Robert Taylor built the first accommodation house. The first store and butcher's shop was opened by Mr. W. Grimmer. In 1867, Mr. Robert Morrison, who had been a storekeeper in the goldfields in Australia, Otago and Westland, took over the store of brown and Plante. For three generations now, this store has been in the hands of the same family, a record which is thought to be unique in New Zealand. Another old-established business is that of W. A. Sherratt, which also has been controlled by three generations of the same family. The first public school was opened in 1866.

By this time Geraldine was beginning to look like a township, but Pleasant Valley, because of its sawmilling industry, was still the bigger settlement. The Pleasant Valley store of Mendelson and Morris supplied many Geraldine people with goods.

Prospects for Geraldine brightened when John Studholme, in 1866, sold to two Australians, Messrs. McKissac and McKenzie, a large area of Raukapuka bushland where they built the first steam sawmill and, later, a flourmill. Some of the bluegums they planted around the mill are still growing.

While this rivalry between the two settlements was going on, a similar contest was being fought out between another two settlements a dozen miles away.

In 1860 Thomas Case wrote to the Provincial Secretary: 'Frequent application is being made for sections in the townships of Arowhenua and Waimatamata, and especially for land in the immediate vicinity of these towns. I therefore have to request authority to enter into an arrangement with Messrs. Hewlings and Jollie to make a survey of all the topographical features within the limits of these township reserves, preparatory to lay out and survey all the necessary roads in the vicinity of these townships, otherwise purchasers of rural sections may easily block up the access to the



The old Bark Hut. First house in Geraldine and home of Samuel Hewlings.

towns, and cause much future troubles and expense to the Government to keep open necessary thoroughfares.'

The Provincial Government gave the Chief Surveyor this authority in October, 1860, and he later reported that 'the township reserves of Arowhenua, 500 acres, and Waimatamate, 680 acres, have been

typographically surveyed, and the exterior boundaries lock-spitted or trenched. The railway reserve at Arowhenua, 40 acres, has been surveyed and the boundaries lock-spitted.' By January, 1864, sections in the new Government township of Arowhenua were available for purchase.

The surveyor of this township, Mr. S. Hewlings, saw that there was a gap between the northern boundary of the subdivision and the Main South Road. He had also seen a private subdivision upset



Early scene of Temuka's Main Street

the Government one in Timaru, where the business area was built in Rhodes Town. 'If the Rhodes brothers can do this, so can I.' He knew a good deal about it, as he had surveyed the Government town of Timaru.

Following the Timaru example, Mr. Hewlings bought the area between Arowhenua and the Main South Road, subdivided it into sections and called the township, 'Wallingford', after his home town in Berkshire, England. In this case, history repeated itself, for, like Rhodes Town in Timaru, Wallingford in Temuka became the business area of the town.

This new subdivision was largely swamp where grew an abundance of flax, raupo, and cabbage trees. Because of the cabbage

Programme of Entertainment

Saturday April 7

- 1 pm Highland Dancing
- 1.15 pm Procession leaves Barker's Crossing
- 1.45 pm Procession arrives at Winchester Domain
- 1.55 pm Aeroplane Lolly Scramble
(conditions permitting)
- 2 pm Pony Club Events
- 2.15 pm March Past and Marching Girls' Display
- 2.30 pm Model Aeroplane Display
- 3 pm Quickstep Display
- 3.30 pm Drum-Majors' Display
- 3.45 pm Marching Girls' Display
- 4 pm Roasting the Bullock
- 4.15 pm Novelty Motor-Cycle Event
- 8 pm Dance : Winchester Hall

Marshal for Procession : Mr. J. GILBERT

Assistant Marshals :

Messrs. J. W. WEAVER and S. BOULTON

Centennial Functions

Sunday April 8

CENTENNIAL CHURCH SERVICES

GERALDINE

Centennial Mass, Church of the Immaculate
Conception, 7.30 am

Combined Service, Geraldine Domain Rose
Gardens, 11 am

Preacher: The Very Rev. Martin Sullivan,
Dean of Christchurch.

If wet, Presbyterian Church and Hall.

TEMUKA

The usual services will be held in the
district churches to celebrate the
Centennial.

Monday April 9

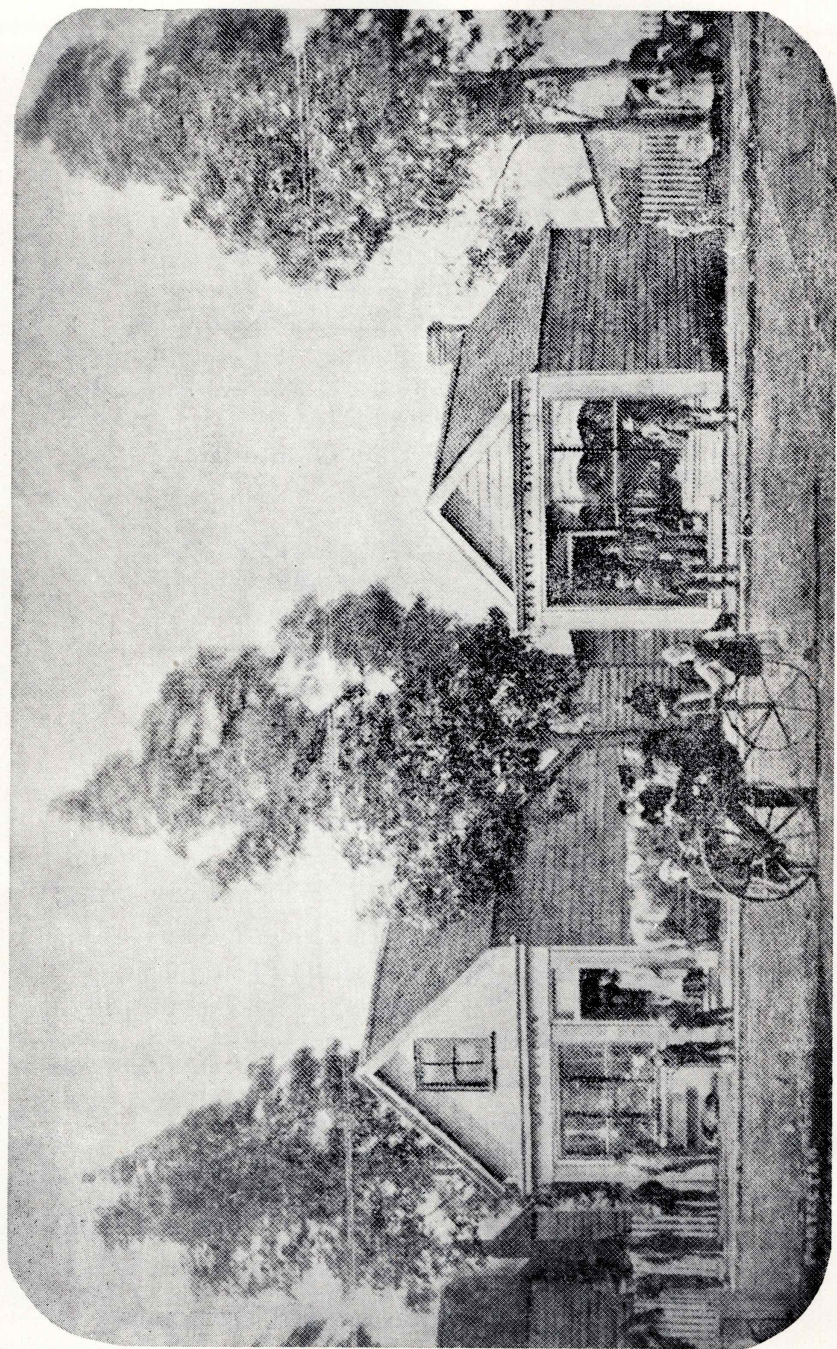
DEDICATION CEREMONIES

- 2 pm Bluegum Tree at Willowbank (Temuka)
3 pm Centennial Project (Traffic Island,
Winchester Corner)
4 pm Totara Tree in Talbot Street (Geraldine)
7 pm Centennial Banquet, Geraldine Town Hall
and Parish Hall. (Admission by Ticket Only.)
Dress Optional.

Tuesday April 10

- 8 pm Centennial Ball, Citizen's Hall, Temuka
Admission £1/1/- New Gaiety Orchestra
Dress Informal

J. Stewart } Masters of Ceremonies
J. W. Weaver }



Talbot Street, Geraldine, in 1866

trees, the Maoris called the place 'Te-umu-kaha', meaning 'the strong oven'. The name arose because of the many Maori ovens in the district used for cooking the sugary pith of the cabbage tree – a delicacy with the early Maoris. On August 17, 1899, the two town districts of Arowhenua and Wallingford were officially joined as the Borough of Temuka, with Mr. J. T. M. Hayhurst as the first Mayor.

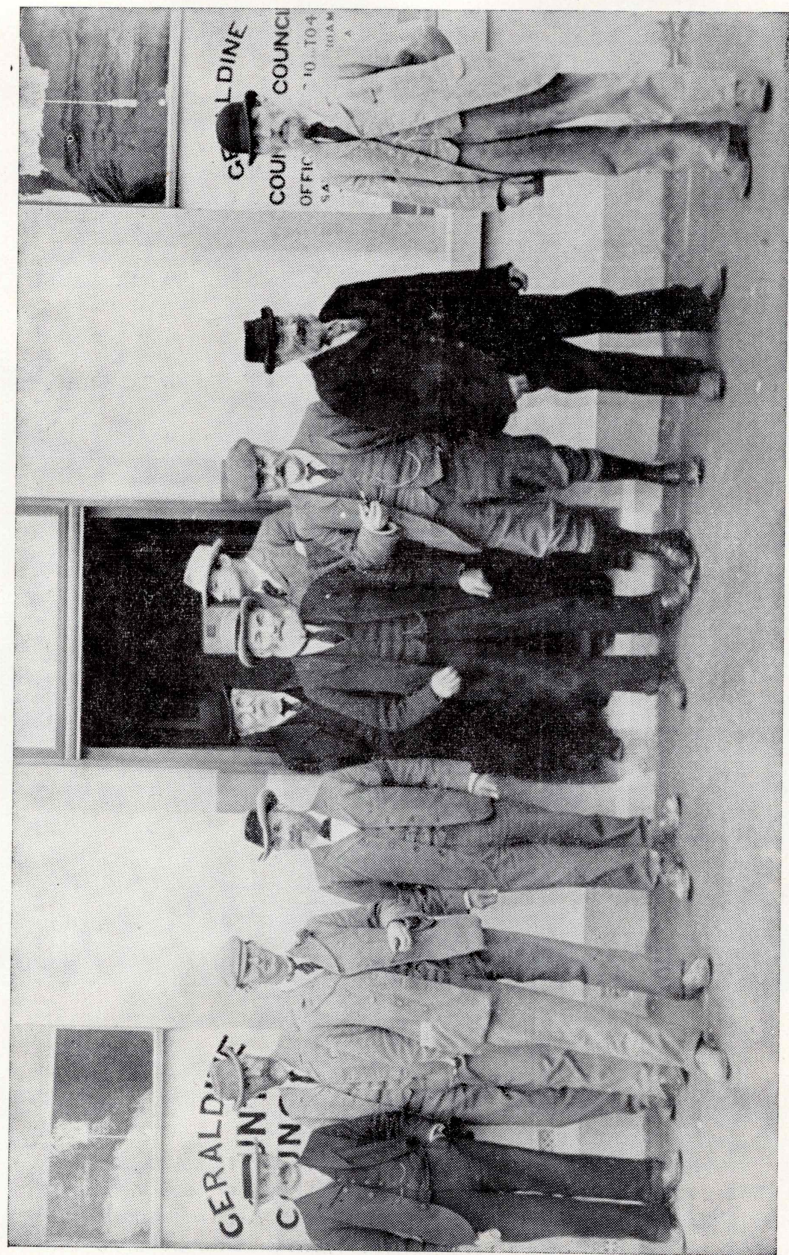
But early Temuka did not have it all its own way because the Rhodes brothers started a subdivision township between the Temuka and Arowhenua rivers, which they named 'Georgetown'. Because it was near the Arowhenua bush, it was thought that Georgetown would be the place for the township. It was surveyed into sections where houses and an accommodation house were built. As the bush



A portion of Temuka's early shopping area

became worked out, however, and Georgetown found itself under water during flood times, the township languished.

Presbyterian church services were held in Georgetown as early as 1862 and the church also conducted a day-school, the second in South Canterbury. In 1865 the Temuka Presbyterian Church was founded. It is the second oldest Presbyterian Church in South Canterbury, Trinity Church, Timaru, being the first. In those early days, the Rev. George Barclay prepared candidates not only for



GERALDINE COUNTY COUNCIL, 1905
 W. Thomas (Reporter), E. H. Templer, B. R. Macdonald, S. Wright, F. W. Stubbs (County Clerk), J. Talbot (Chairman), W. Dixon, C. J. Dennistoun, A. Kelman Snr., A. Metcalf.

Presbyterian membership but also for confirmation for the Church of England. On November 16, 1879, the foundation stone of the first Roman Catholic Church in the County was laid in Temuka.

In 1860 Mr. Neale built the first house, known as 'Willowbank', at Temuka. Mr. George Levens, who lived in Temuka for the remainder of his long life, came to work for Mr. Neale when he was 16 years of age.

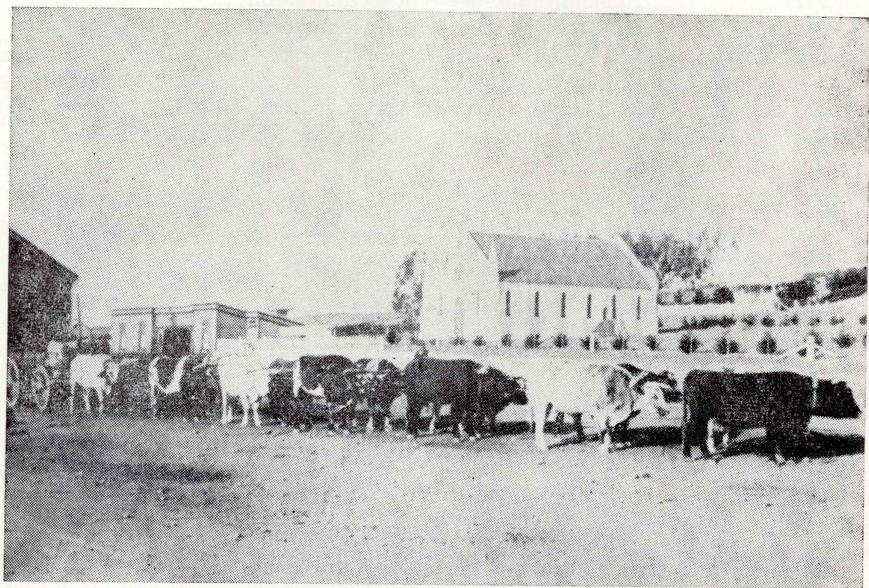
Mr. Levens told how an Australian digger gave him some bluegum seeds which he planted near the 'Willowbank' homestead. The tree that grew from one of these seeds is still there and is considered to be the oldest bluegum in South Canterbury. The second building in Temuka was erected by Thomas Copestake. A few months later, Joseph Deans built the Nugget Hotel where the Crown Hotel now stands.

Temuka has had a number of floods, but the biggest was that of 1868. At 4 o'clock on the afternoon of February 2, rain commenced with such force that its noise on the roof of a house deafened any conversation. By 11 o'clock at night, flood waters poured into the town with the inhabitants retreating before it. At daylight 'the whole of the plains had become a lake from the hills to the sea, with a few islands left here and there. The water was up to the bar of the Royal Hotel and at the brickyards a horse swam over the fence without touching it. The footbridge across the Temuka River was washed down to Milford and the debris lined the seashore. During this flood the home of one of the men working at Parr's flourmill near Kerrytown was washed away and a mother and daughter were drowned.

After the flood, the inhabitants had a busy time digging the mud left by the flood out of their houses. This did not stop Temuka from progressing along its energetic way towards becoming a prosperous town.

Temuka was lucky in that it had the leadership of one of the most dynamic men in South Canterbury. He started his New Zealand career as a shepherd at Malvern Hills Station, then rented Ashburton Station. Soon after the Mackenzie Country was discovered, this man, John Hayhurst, took up Simons Pass Station, where he employed Andrew Burnett as shepherd.

Like John Grigg, Hayhurst saw possibilities in the swamp lands near the coast, so he bought a large area of land south of Temuka and built there a mansion house called 'Green Hayes'. He owned a block of business premises in the Temuka main street; built the first flourmill in South Canterbury and the district became known as Milford. If Mr. Hayhurst had been successful in his years of determined effort to have a harbour at Milford, the capital of South Canterbury would have been Temuka. *The Timaru Herald* of September 11, 1877, published a poem about this proposal. Here is the first verse :—



Bullock Team



Modern Transport

*'Will you come into my harbour?' said Hayhurst to the ship;
 'Tis the prettiest little harbour into which you e'er did slip;
 The entrance to my harbour is through a narrow gut,
 But when you're well inside of it, the entrance can be shut.'
 'Oh, no! no!' said the stately ship, 'To ask me is in vain,
 For who goes into your entrance, comes never out again.'*

4

ROAD BOARDS

JOHN HAYHURST was elected a member of the first Geraldine District Road Board at a meeting of ratepayers held at the Nugget Hotel, Temuka, in February, 1864. Their district extended from the Rangitata to the Opihi River up to its source near Burke's Pass, and on the west was bounded by 'the ridge of hills dividing the waters of the Opihi and Rangitata from the waters of the Tekapo'. Voting power was according to the letting value of land — under £25, one vote; under £50, two votes; under £100, three votes; under £200, four votes; more than £200, five votes.

The Provincial Council resolved that each Road District should have a claim to the expenditure on public works within the district, of sums equal to not less than one-fourth, and not more than one-half of the territorial revenue raised within the district. The Council also gave the Road Boards power for the erection of toll-gates on roads and bridges, tolls not to exceed 6d. for horses; 4d. for cattle; 1/- for every vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast, with an additional 6d. for each additional beast; and 1d. for each sheep, lamb, goat or pig in one drove, not exceeding 100, and ½d. for each additional animal. The payment to the clerk was £75 a year.

In 1870 the Geraldine Road District was subdivided into two road districts — Geraldine and Temuka; and in the following year it was again divided into Temuka, Geraldine and Mount Peel Road Districts. Road Boards are now largely forgotten, and it is not generally realised that these Boards largely set the pattern of our countryside by deciding where roads and bridges were to be built.

The amount of money these Boards could spend was dependant on the rates they could collect. That amount was not large, and for years many roads were little better than bullock tracks.

Some roads follow bullock tracks originally formed by bullock drivers fixing a point on some distant mountain and making as straight as possible for that point. Goods were carted by bullock wagon and one of the first bullock teams in Geraldine was owned by Robert Taylor who bought his team at the Timaru show for £120.



Temuka business area, centre of a thriving district.

Frank Poppelwell was a well-known bullock driver. So was Bullocky Jones who brought timber from the Kakahu bush and sold it in South Canterbury townships.

Cobb and Coy's coaches in 1864 speeded up transport. When, in the following year, it was announced that the coach would run from Christchurch to Timaru in a day, the *Christchurch Press* remarked: 'Horses, spring-carts, waggonettes and buggies have long since superseded swag-carrying; and now the world are to be passengers by Cobb and Coy. to Timaru in a day. It is a wondrous sight — that Timaru mail — a cross between a diligence and a coach of the date of Queen Anne, so bulky-looking yet so light in substance that as it stands, ready for its horses, the light breeze makes it float on its leather fore and aft springs. Thunder-bolt-holding eagles, star-spangled banners, and other devices, not in the best of taste, clearly establish the country of its manufacture, while the driver, in steeple-crowned hat, full of strange phrases and nasal vernacular, adroitly managing his plunging team, completes the unity of the Yankee notion.

5

THE 'COCKIES'

COBB AND COY'S COACHES went through Orari and not through Geraldine. Alfred Ford, a mounted mailman, travelled to and from Geraldine with the mail.

Better communication brought more people wanting to go on the land. From the 'sixties onwards there came the ever-increasing demand for land. Those who had the land were determined to hold on to what they had. The situation was summed up by Samuel Butler, the owner of Mesopotamia Station, when he described Heaven as 'a well-fenced run and no cockatoos'. Cockatoos or cockies, a word imported in the 'sixties, was an Australian term for the small farmer.

Numbers of these small farmers were Irish immigrants. Perhaps because it resembled their homeland, they preferred the downland country and their settlements extended from Pleasant Point to Geraldine, although groups settled in the Kerrytown and Temuka districts.

These people had left their beloved Ireland, not from choice, but from necessity. In 1848 the potato blight appeared in Ireland and within a few weeks, flourishing potato crops became rotting vegetation. Out of a population of 8,000,000 people, 1,000,000 died of starvation; within 10 years from 1850, another 1,000,000 had emigrated, mostly to America.

Irish settlers had known what it meant to be evicted from a farm by the landlord, so they determined it would not happen in this new world. Prices might rise, or prices might fall, but if a man owned a bit of land, a cow, a pig, and some fowls, he could look the whole world in the face without fear. These people built cob houses from the earth they settled on, and worked on neighbouring stations, mostly as shearers, to pay off whatever mortgage they owed.

Hard work could not suppress the Irish love for life and laughter, and farmers for miles around came to a concert or dance. The big day of the year was St. Patrick's Day, March 17, when a sports gathering was held at Geraldine. The concert at night was always full to overflowing, where the songs of old Ireland were sung, and with full-throated gusto, the whole audience would sing :—

*'Tis the most distressful country that ever you have seen ;
They're hanging men and women for the wearing of the green.'*

One St. Patrick's night concert sobered down considerably when the sounds of shots were heard. An over-enthusiastic celebrant began firing shots, fortunately into the air, until he was calmed down by his anxious friends. They could also keep a secret, for the whereabouts of the whisky still at Waitohi was never officially known.

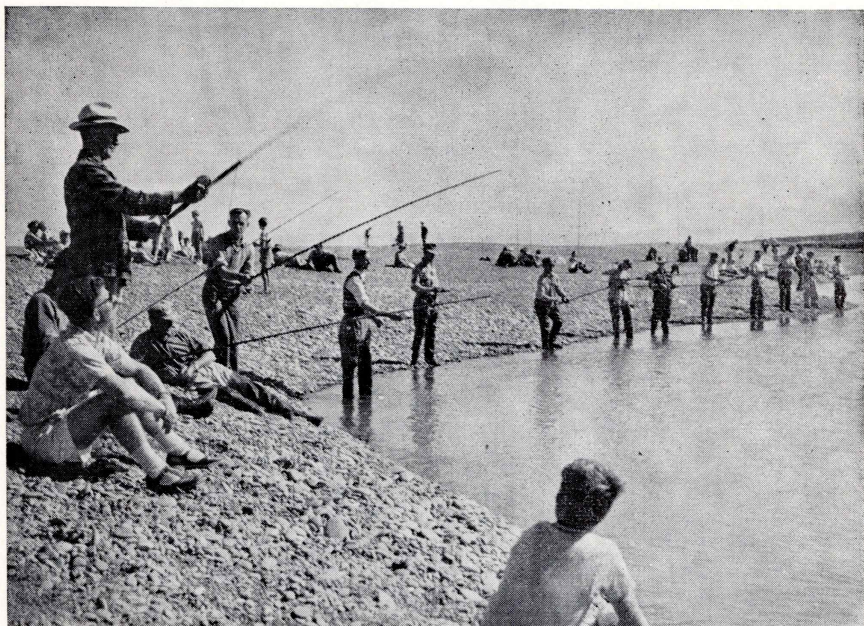
6

LAND HUNGER

NOT ONLY THE IRISH, but other small farmers continually tried to freehold some of the land held on leasehold by the large runholder, or squatter as he was commonly termed. The squatter had a pre-emptive right over land where improvements had been made, so fences and sheds, which counted as improvements, were put in all sorts of places where the squatter wanted to protect his land. If someone wanted to buy land on a station, the station-holder was notified of this by the Provincial Government and given the pre-emptive right to buy it within a month. The squatter met some of these demands but could not freehold all his holding, so portions had to be sacrificed to the 'cockies'. Largely in this way, Raukapuka was whittled down from 60,000 acres to the size of a farm. But it took 50 years to do it.

One squatter, sighing for the good old days, said : ' There was a minimum of trouble in the early days. There were no rabbits. In the back country now there is no peace ; there are always rabbits and deer to contend with, besides the usual risk of a bad winter,

snow slides, and heavy mustering expenses. But with the bridging of the rivers, there came a rush for settlement, and those people who could, had to buy as much of their holdings as they were able, and then came cultivation and botheration, long-woolled sheep, crutching and every conceivable trouble one can or cannot imagine, and wheat-growing, which would drive a man mad. Oh, for the good old days, but they have passed away, never to return, and when it comes to all-round farming, such as grain-growing and keeping sheep at the same time, here is no rest from one week's end to another.'



Fishing the Rangitata for Salmon.

Prices remained steady during the 'sixties and the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 caused a rise in the price of wool. Then came the slump of the 'eighties. In the towns men were put off their jobs. It then became a case of either starving in town or looking for work in the country. Hordes of men 'swagged it' throughout the countryside. Almost every station found itself with about twice the number of men it needed, but no station refused any man a meal or a bed for the night.

Bitterness caused by the slump intensified agitation for more land for settlement. This feeling was reflected in the result of the 1890

election when the Liberal Party, on the promise to break up big estates, was swept into power. Cheviot, 84,755 acres, in North Canterbury, the first big estate to be taken over, was subdivided into 129 holdings. As a result of this subdivision, the population, within a year, increased from 85 people to 650. Then came Waikakahi, 47,000 acres freehold, held by Allan McLean. It was subdivided into 150 holdings. In 1904 the Government bought 38,684 acres of the Levels estate from the New Zealand and Australian Land Company and subdivided it into 158 sections to form the district of Rosewill. The Hayhurst property of Green Hayes was subdivided into 30 farms. By 1914, the Government had bought, for £1,624,801, 45 South Canterbury properties for subdivision.

7

FARM REVOLUTION

CLOSER SETTLEMENT came just in time to meet the biggest revolution farming has known. When the first motor-car chugged over the Rangitata bridge, few farmers guessed that this marked a new era. The horseless carriage was treated as rather a joke until 1910 when Ford introduced his Model T car to New Zealand. The 1914 war dried up supplies from America, and it was not until 1920 that alert salesmen canvassed along every country road to tell the story of what a car meant to the farmer, and especially the farmer's wife. But that was only the beginning. The tractor followed the car, then the header harvester, then the automatic hay-baler, and now aerial topdressing. Mechanisation of the farm still goes on.

With mechanisation has come electricity. Modern electrical appliances have taken from domestic life much of its drudgery. No longer does the farmer's wife worry about keeping a side of mutton in the middle of summer. Now the deep-freeze keeps meat and vegetables indefinitely. The clothes and the dish-washing machines, the vacuum cleaner, and the electric stove have transformed the home. And new electrical appliances are still appearing on the market.

Farm practice is also different. Thirty years ago, paddock after paddock of golden grain was one of the pleasant sights of a South Canterbury summer. Now a paddock of wheat is less common and small seeds growing has developed instead. Other grain-growers, taking the advice of Major Johnson of Raincliff Station that 'the wealth of New Zealand is in the wool-shed', have turned to grazing sheep.

8

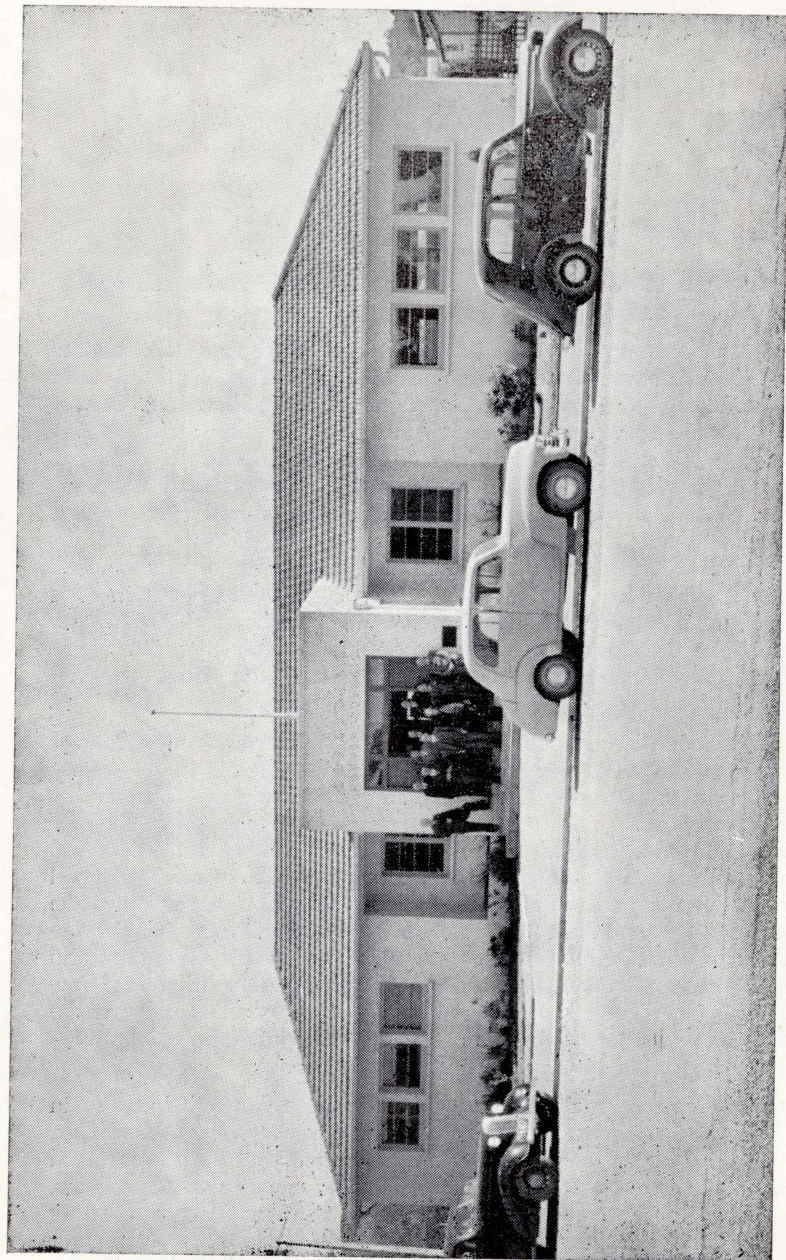
GOVERNANCE

ALONG WITH THESE CHANGES in farm life have come changes in local administration.

The most important of these local body changes in this district was the creation of County Councils with limited local powers after the abolition of the Provincial Governments. The Geraldine County Council was created under the Counties Act of 1876, and its first meeting was held on January 4, 1877, in the Magistrate's Courthouse, Timaru. It was decided that the whole County Act should not be enforced and, in this way, Road Boards maintained their powers. The first chairman of the Board was Mr. W. Postlethwaite. Its boundaries extended from the Rangitata to the source of Forest Creek in the Two Thumb Range; along that range to the Southern Alps and along the Alps to the Hopkins River, then to Lake Ohau. From there it followed the Ohau and Waitaki rivers to Black Forest Station; down the Hakataramea River to the Hunter Hills to Mount Nimrod, then along the Pareora River to the sea.

These boundaries continued until the Mackenzie County Council was formed in 1882 and the Levels County in 1894. The County area of 946 square miles is divided into three ridings — Temuka, of 210 square miles, has four council representatives; Geraldine, of 290 square miles, sends three councillors; and Mount Peel, 446 square miles, is represented by one councillor. The County Council is mostly concerned with roads and bridges and it needs only two illustrations to show that it gives of its best to the County. The bridge built across the Opihi River on the main road by the Geraldine and Levels County Councils was the first major concrete bridge in New Zealand. The Council also helped to pioneer tar-sealing and was the first Council in South Canterbury to have the whole of its highway — from Rangitata to the Opihi River — tar-sealed.

Geraldine has been fortunate not only in its Council, but also in its Parliamentary representatives. The first of these was Alfred Cox, who was re-elected to represent the Geraldine district in the Provincial Council in 1862. In 1894 F. R. Flatman, founder of Woodbury, became Parliamentary representative for the district, after defeating A. E. G. Rhodes on two occasions. He originally worked for Mr. A. Cox at Raukapuka and in 1866 joined with Robert Taylor to start a sawmill at Woodbury, where they laid out the town of Woodbury and established there a store and an hotel. He represented



The present Geraldine County Council Offices

the electorate for 19 years and at one time was Deputy Chairman of Committees. During his time in Parliament the name was changed to the Temuka electorate.

In 1914 Mr. Charles J. Talbot, later chairman of the Mackenzie County Council, was elected and was defeated by Mr. T. D. Burnett in the 1919 election. T. D. Burnett has been described as the greatest public figure ever to have lived in South Canterbury. The work he did for this district includes the founding of the Stratheona hostel, for the training of girls for domestic and farm work, at Pleasant Point and run at his own expense. He gave a house in Timaru for use as a museum. The church he built at Cave is unique in New Zealand and has become a place of pilgrimage for thousands of people.

His memory has lingered in the minds of South Canterbury folk largely because of his ability to create the striking phrase. Few speakers or writers in New Zealand have equalled his power with words, a gift probably acquired from his Bible-reading mother. His inscription on the Burke's Pass monument reads: 'Oh, ye who enter the portals of the Mackenzie to found homes, take the word of a child of the misty gorges, and plant forest trees for your lives. So shall your mountain facings and river flats be preserved to your children's children for evermore.' This inscription has been quoted in books and periodicals all over the world.

His words certainly had power in Parliament, for when T. D. Burnett spoke, both sides in the House listened. But his greatest victory was gained without making a speech. When the Hon. Robert Semple, in his enthusiasm of new power, astounded a slump-conscious Parliament by announcing that he had given the old order the running shoes, and talked optimistically of the millions he proposed spending on public works projects, T. D. Burnett was not dismayed.

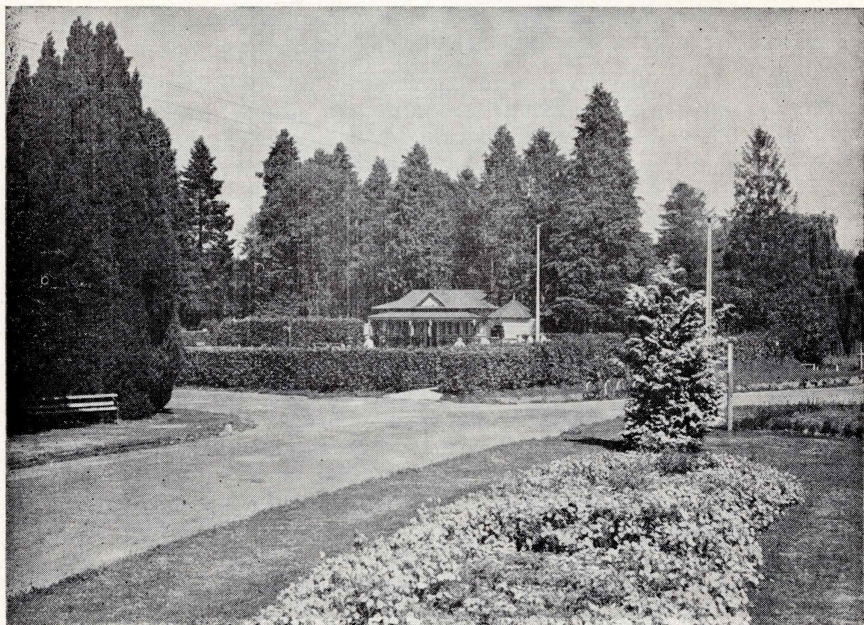
That night, on his way home, 'T.D.' said, with deep-throated emphasis: 'Bob seems to be throwing a lot of money around. In the morning I'm taking my billy along for some of it.'

Though on opposite sides of the House, they were old friends, and understood each other, for they had characteristics in common. They were Bob and Tom to each other and it was on this friendly basis that Mr. Burnett told Mr. Semple about a scheme he had dreamed of and worked for since boyhood days. It did not take long for Mr. Semple to agree to the plan, then start the Public Works Department upon this project—the Downlands Scheme.

During the drought we have just experienced, the Downlands Scheme brought fresh water to farm homes. Every time a tap is turned on, many a farmer, and many a housewife, feels grateful for one of the greatest blessings brought to South Canterbury.

T. D. Burnett did not see his dream come true. Just before the Downlands Scheme was completed, the illness he fought for 20 years overcame him. He died on November 30, 1941.

Twenty faithful friends carried his coffin up the steep slope at Black Point which drops, sheer down on two sides, 800 ft. to the Tasman riverbed. To stand on that point is breathtaking; certainly it needs nerve to go near the edge. What seems but a stone's throw away, those kings of the Southern Alps, Cook, Tasman and Sefton, stand out in icy magnificence. On the grave cairn is the inscription :



A picturesque scene in the Temuka Domain near the Bowling Green.

‘Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.’ Few burial places in the whole world can be more awe-inspiring.

After Mr. Burnett's death, Mr. J. Acland represented the Temuka electorate until its abolition in 1946, when it was absorbed by Ashburton and Waimate electorates, but most of the Geraldine County went into the Waimate electorate for which Mr. D. C. Kidd was Member until his death on September 24, 1954, when he was succeeded by Mr. A. J. Davey, chairman of the Geraldine County Council.

‘THE BLANKET WEARS OUT’

THE 9,000 PEOPLE who live in the Geraldine County have learned, during the century of settlement, to love their land. Some are descended from early settlers down to the third and fourth generation, and most are satisfied with their lot and do not want to leave it. Many who have left would like to come back, including people who have become important in other parts.

Yet, for the sake of local development, the important people are those who stay on the land. The Maoris had a proverb — ‘The blanket wears out, but the land remains.’ They were ever ready to fight for their land. So have been the pakeha. During the first 40 years of this century, our young men of three generations have gone overseas to do the same thing. The two world wars cost the Geraldine County district the lives of more than 350 young men.

Farming has its difficulties and the long, lean years of the slump of the 1930’s taught many how difficult farming could be. To those who stuck it out, the present prosperity is giving them some reward in a higher standard of living, and a greater measure of security than ever they have had.

This is, surely, as it should be. Almost all our sustenance comes from the land — food, clothing and shelter. Those who stay on the land, in seed-time and in harvest; in summer and in winter; year in and year out — these are, at least so far as this district is concerned — the salt of the earth.

PRINTED AT

THE HERALD PRINTING WORKS

TIMARU, N. Z.

Centennial Committees

Chairman : The Chairman Geraldine County Council (Mr. A. J. DAVEY, M.P.).

Deputy Chairmen : Messrs. C. S. DAVIES (Mayor of Geraldine), G. A. HARRIS (Mayor of Temuka).

Executive Committee : Messrs. W. S. AITKEN, A. J. BURMESTER, W. S. CROTTY, G. EDGAR, I. E. JONES, C. J. KERR, A. J. KENNEDY, R. A. LYALL, R. D. RICHARDS, A. H. STRINGER, G. SOUTH, J. WOODHEAD.

Procession Committee : Messrs. I. E. JONES (Chairman), A. D. TALBOT, S. J. LISTER, W. S. AITKEN, G. J. SLATER, J. M. LITTLE, G. A. DAVEY, and Mesdames E. S. ELWORTHY, A. J. KENNEDY, A. D. TALBOT, F. M. MARTIN, A. TOOLEY ; Traffic Officer R. S. KING.

Entertainment Committee : Messrs. G. A. HARRIS (Chairman), R. D. RICHARDS, C. TOMS, T. A. BRUCE, A. N. BLAKISTON, A. J. KENNEDY, and Mesdames A. J. DAVEY, G. A. HARRIS, C. S. DAVIES, A. J. KENNEDY.

Historical Committee : Messrs. A. J. DAVEY, M.P. (Chairman), G. A. HARRIS, C. S. DAVIES, A. D. TALBOT, and Mesdames V. F. BOYLE, A. J. DAVEY, A. D. TALBOT, A. G. STOAKES, G. D. DAVISON.

Finance Committee : Messrs. J. WOODHEAD (Chairman), H. W. WILLIAMSON, G. A. HARRIS.

Sports Committee : Messrs. G. SOUTH (Chairman), R. A. LYALL, E. L. B. PEMBERTON, R. WALKER, T. GUNNING, O. S. PRIEST, Mrs. J. FERGUSON.

Children's Committee : Messrs. G. EDGAR (Chairman), W. A. PIERRE, G. CHAPMAN-COHEN, E. L. B. PEMBERTON, R. JONES.

Religious Observances : All Clergy in Geraldine and Temuka boroughs and Geraldine County.

Publicity Committee : Messrs. A. H. STRINGER (Chairman), B. E. GALE, D. C. McKECHNIE, A. J. BURMESTER.

Joint Secretaries : Messrs. E. P. BENNETT, W. L. BURT, A. HILL.

Treasurer : Mr. C. T. CLARKE.